

CAN Community Council Notes
 February 23, 2026, 11:30 am – 1:00 pm
 Zoom Video Conference

Attendees: Donovan DePriest, Caroline Reynolds, Ara Merjanian, Nancy Gilliam, Sona Shah

CAN Staff: Raul Alvarez, Jelina Tunstill

Guests: None

Call to Order	The meeting was called to order at 11:45 am. A quorum was present at 11:58 am.
Executive Director’s Report	<p>Summary: Raul shared that the CAN Celebration will take place March 25th and the Executive Committee just approved the awardees so marketing will begin for that. We will be recognizing the funders for the CAN MHFA Initiative, trainers, and can organizations that trained more than 75+ of their employees. We will also be recognizing 2 people for Community Leadership. He announced that we will be having the Dialogue 2 Action trainings in April and a Building Community Forum in April. He also shared that the Board will be using the Economic Mobility Report and the data that stands out to start selecting topics for presentations for the Board. Raul also shared that we are shifting from the podcast to a “top 10” community calendar.</p> <p>Comments and Suggestions: Ara asked if there was still space available for the luncheon in March. Raul said there is room for a couple more people and stated that we are creating a community connections breakfast. Ara and Caroline will reach out after the meeting.</p>
Approval of minutes from the January 25, 2026 Meetings	The January 25, 2026 minutes were approved unanimously on a motion by Sona and a second by Caroline.
Community Council Chair’s Report	Summary: Sona stated that her and Pamela have met with multiple people to understand their roles. She said the Community Council is continuing to work on social capital.
Social Capital Research Overview	Summary: Jelina shared the CAN process and flow of information and 2206 CAN Community Council meeting and events calendar. She shared that the research collected last year over social capital was available in 5 categories: 1. Information gathered from our meetings and forums 2. Mentorship 3. Data and collection 4. Belonging 5. Existing frameworks. She then shared a proposed CAN Framework for Connected Communities based off of the conversations that were had over the past year and the frameworks that already exist. The CAN Framework for Connected Communities includes 5 pillars: connecting through... where we live, where we learn, arts and culture, work, and civic engagement & community



	<p>advocacy. Keeping in mind that social capital requires connecting with people like you, not like you, and with people who have influence/ power.</p> <p>Comments and Suggestions: Ara stated that a lot of this research could be added to the report. Raul added that we can add the faith community. Sona stated that the strength of this relationship is the institutional relationships and the community leadership piece of this makes sense. Raul shared that with CHW's and health champions they have their cohort that they learned with, but is there a way that we could do that through the pillars in our framework to connect with people who are disconnected or just help people engage in those ways. Ara suggested we pick one of the pillars for each presentation throughout the year. He suggested listing organizations for each pillar to help select speakers. Raul shared that we can address multiple of the pillars in one work session. Raul asked that we could use this framework for connecting with community and thinking about how to engage in these ways. Sona stated that she notices how many people just need a space to organize and connect over ideas. She also wanted us to think about what success looks like. Raul added that looking connecting through work he feels that work is cross cutting with the other pillars so maybe that's something we could pull out of the framework. Sona asked if we were thinking about specific populations, she is connected with the aging work happening in the community and could connect us with aging QOL Studies. Ara suggested scheduling another work session to finalize the framework and pin down speakers. He also suggested starting our recruitment efforts. Jelina suggested that some of this work can happen via email since we will need to schedule a speaker for March.</p> <p>Workplan Suggestions: Ara created a document to help guide the 2026 workplan. Ara stated that we can start with an outline of our final report so we know what information we need to gather. His suggested methodology is making sense, making choices, and making progress. He shared that the synthesis Jelina shared is a big piece of "making sense." This section will include descriptions and findings and we still need to identify gaps where we want to find out more. "Making Choices" will include frameworks and models and conclusions from those. "Making Progress" would include conclusions and recommendations. His suggestion for next steps was to review what we have, identify the people and organizations that can support our work, engage with CAN member organizations and key SMEs and then identify the means, methods, and questions. He shared that he is interested in hearing from UT, iACT, Steven Pedigo, the Chambers of Commerce, and specifically focusing on opportunity youth.</p> <p>Comments and Suggestions: Caroline added that having a diverse group makes it so much easier than working alone. Caroline also suggested making a presentation to the neighborhood council.</p>
Adjourn	The meeting was adjourned at 1:00 pm